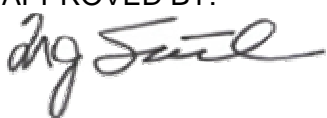




## DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY/PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: <b>LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS</b>	POLICY NO. <b>202.21</b>	EFFECTIVE DATE <b>08/01/04</b>	PAGE <b>1 of 2</b>
APPROVED BY:  Director	SUPERSEDES <b>202.21</b>	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE <b>05/14/04</b>	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) <b>2</b>

### **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy and guidelines to ensure all non-English speaking DMH consumers receive equal access to services in the language of their choice (i.e., consumer's primary or preferred language).

- 1.1.1 **Under no circumstances shall a consumer be denied services because of language barriers.**

### **POLICY**

- 2.1 DMH will continue to recruit and hire mental health professionals who are proficient in non-English languages
- 2.2 In accordance with applicable Federal, State and County Policy and Agreements, DMH will provide equal access to all non-English speaking mentally ill consumers in Los Angeles County.

### **PROCEDURE**

- 3.1 The DMH Training and Cultural Competency Bureau will make annual training available in the use of interpreter services for staff that have direct consumer contact.
- 3.2 Brochures and other forms of literature will be made available in the eleven (11) threshold languages for directly operated and contract clinic sites. Other than English, the threshold languages are: Armenian, Cambodian/Khmer, Cantonese, Farsi, Korean, Mandarin, other-Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.
- 3.2.1 Directly operated and contract programs will have access to AT&T Language Line Services interpreter services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, via ACCESS CENTER at 800-854-7771.
- 3.2.2 Directly operated and contract programs will maintain an internal roster of staff proficient in non-English languages.
- 3.2.2.1 DMH staff identified by the Human Resources Bureau as proficient in a non-English language may qualify for bilingual compensation.



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3.2.2.2 Identified bilingual staff available for interpreting services will be provided training.

3.2.3 Exception: Consumer needs may better be served by referral to an agency provider of similar but more culturally or language-specific services. The referral process will allow latitude for clinical judgment in some cases.

4.1 Interpreter services are available at no additional cost to the consumer.

4.2 In accordance with Title VI (Civil Rights Act) requirements, the expectation that family members provide interpreter services is prohibited. See Section 3.2.1 on the availability of AT&T language line services.

4.2.1 If a consumer **insists** on using a family member or friend as an interpreter, they may do so only after being informed of the availability of free interpreter services.

4.2.2 It is strongly recommended that minor children not be used as interpreters.

4.3 Emergency involuntary hospitalization assessment shall be made providing appropriate interpretive services.

### **AUTHORITY**

Voluntary Compliance Agreement  
OCR 09-89-3143/US  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of Civil Rights  
CCR Title 9, Chapter 11, Section 1810.410(b)(4)

### **REVIEW DATE**

This policy shall be reviewed on or before May 15, 2009